

RECOGNIZING WEN CHYAN

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 9, 2009

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Wen Chyan, from the 26th District of Texas, who was the winner of the Siemens Westinghouse Competition in Math, Science, and Technology.

Wen Chyan's curiosity about chemistry was sparked by his parents, both scientists, at an early age. Wen's astuteness has earned him recognition from the U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad, U.S.A. Biology Olympiad, and the Texas Science and Engineering Fair. His ambition and desire to contribute to medical advancements prompted him to create an antimicrobial coating for medical devices, a development that has the potential to save lives. Wen is the first TAMS student to advance to such a high level in this competition, which features the research of more than 1,000 students. Wen's hard work has earned him high recognition and a \$100,000 scholarship.

I am proud to recognize Wen Chyan for the stunning research he has accomplished, the award he has received, and the promise he holds for the future of American science. It is a privilege to represent Mr. Chyan in the 26th District of Texas.

INTRODUCTION OF THE
"THOMASINA E. JORDAN INDIAN
TRIBES OF VIRGINIA FEDERAL
RECOGNITION ACT"

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 9, 2009

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, in 2006 representatives and leaders of Virginia's Native American tribes left their communities and flew to England to participate in ceremonies that were a prelude to the 400th anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in America. Some of the distinguished Virginia residents who made this trip are the blood descendants and leaders of the surviving seven tribes that once were a part of the Great Powhatan Confederacy that initially helped sustain the colonists during their difficult first years at Jamestown. Virginia's best known Indian, Pocahontas, traveled to England in 1617 with her husband John Rolfe and was received by English royalty. She died a year later of smallpox and is buried in the chapel of the parish church in Gravesend, England.

Two years ago, this nation celebrated the 400th anniversary of the settlement of Jamestown. But it was not a celebration for Native American descendants of Pocahontas, for they have yet to be recognized by our federal government. Unlike most Native American tribes that were officially recognized when they signed peace treaties with the federal government, Virginia's six Native American tribes made their peace with the Kings of England. Most notable among these was the Treaty of

1677 between these tribes and King Charles II. This treaty has been recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia every year for the past 331 years when the Governor accepts tribute from the tribes in a ceremony now celebrated at the State Capitol. I had the honor of attending last November what is understood to be the longest celebrated treaty in the United States.

The forefathers of the tribal leaders who gathered last Thanksgiving in Richmond were the first to welcome the English, and during the first few years of settlement, ensured their survival. As was the case for most Native American tribes, as the settlement prospered and grew, the tribes suffered. Those who resisted quickly became subdued, were pushed off their historic lands, and, up through much of the 20th Century, were denied full rights as U.S. citizens. Despite their devastating loss of land and population, the Virginia tribes survived, preserving their heritage and their identity. Their story of survival spans four centuries of racial hostility and coercive state and state-sanctioned actions.

The Virginia tribes' history, however, diverges from that of most Native Americans in two unique ways. The first explains why the Virginia tribes were never recognized by the federal government; the second explains why congressional action is needed today. First, by the time the federal government was established in 1789, the Virginia tribes were in no position to seek recognition. They had already lost control of their land, withdrawn into isolated communities and stripped of most of their rights. Lacking even the rights granted by the English Kings, and our own Bill of Rights, federal recognition was nowhere within their reach.

The second unique circumstance for the Virginia tribes is what they experienced at the hands of the state government during the first half of the 20th Century. It has been called a "paper genocide." At a time when the federal government granted Native Americans the right to vote, Virginia's elected officials adopted racially hostile laws targeted at those classes of people who did not fit into the dominant white society. The fact that some of Virginia's ruling elite claimed to be blood descendants of Pocahontas in their view meant that no one else in Virginia could make a claim they were Native American and a descendant of Pocahontas' people. To do so would mean that Virginia's ruling elite were what they decreed all non-whites to be: part of "the inferior Negroid race."

With great hypocrisy, Virginia's ruling elite pushed policies that culminated with the enactment of the Racial Integrity Act of 1924. This act directed state officials, and zealots like Walter Plecker, to destroy state and local courthouse records and reclassify in Orwellian fashion all non-whites as "colored." It targeted Native Americans with a vengeance, denying Native Americans in Virginia their identity.

To call oneself a "Native American" in Virginia was to risk a jail sentence of up to one year. In defiance of the law, members of Virginia's tribes traveled out of state to obtain marriage licenses or to serve their country in wartime. The law remained in effect until it was struck down in federal court in 1967. In that intervening period between 1924 and 1967, state officials waged a war to destroy all

public and many private records that affirmed the existence of Native Americans in Virginia. Historians have affirmed that no other state compares to Virginia's efforts to eradicate its citizens' Indian identity.

All of Virginia's state-recognized tribes have filed petitions with the Bureau of Acknowledgment seeking federal recognition. But it is a very heavy burden the Virginia tribes will have to overcome, and one fraught with complications that officials from the bureau have acknowledged may never be resolved in their lifetime. The acknowledgment process is already expensive, subject to unreasonable delays, and lacking in dignity. Virginia's paper genocide only further complicates these tribes' quest for federal recognition, making it difficult to furnish corroborating state and official documents and aggravating the injustice already visited upon them.

It wasn't until 1997, when Governor George Allen signed legislation directing state agencies to correct state records, that the tribes were given the opportunity to correct official state documents that had deliberately been altered to list them as "colored." The law allows living members of the tribes to correct their records, but the law cannot correct the damage done to past generations or recover documents that were purposely destroyed during the "Plecker Era."

In 1999, the Virginia General Assembly adopted a resolution calling upon Congress to enact legislation recognizing the Virginia tribes. I am pleased to have honored that request, and beginning in 2000 and in subsequent sessions, Virginia's Senators and I have introduced legislation to recognize the Virginia tribes.

There is no doubt that the Chickahominy, the Eastern Chickahominy, the Monacan, the Nansemond, the Rappahannock and the Upper Mattaponi tribes exist. These tribes have existed on a continuous basis since before the first European settlers stepped foot in America. They are here with us today.

I know there is resistance in Congress to grant any Native American tribe federal recognition. And I can appreciate how the issue of gambling and its economic and moral dimensions has influenced many Members' perspectives on tribal recognition issues. The six Virginia tribes are not seeking federal legislation so that they can build casinos. They find this assertion offensive to their moral beliefs. They are seeking federal recognition because it is an urgent matter of justice and because elder members of their tribes, who were denied a public education and the economic opportunities available to most Americans, are suffering and should be entitled to the federal health and housing assistance available to federally recognized tribes.

To underscore this point, the legislation I am introducing includes language approved last session by the House of Representatives that would prevent the tribes from engaging in gaming on their federal land even if everyone else in Virginia were allowed to engage in Class III casino-type gaming.

In the name of decency, fairness and humanity, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and bring closure to centuries of injustice Virginia's Native American tribes have experienced.

HONORING AARON R. KLEINMEYER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 9, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Aaron R. Kleinmeyer a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 357, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Aaron has been very active with his troop participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Aaron has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Aaron R. Kleinmeyer for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

MAYOR LYNDA BELL OF THE CITY OF HOMESTEAD, FLORIDA

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 9, 2009

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable woman and friend from Florida's 25th District, Mayor Lynda Bell of the City of Homestead. She was elected Mayor in November 2007 and serves as Homestead's first woman mayor in the city's 94-year history. Prior to this accomplishment, she served four years on the city council from 2003–2007 and was Vice Mayor for two years.

Born in Hollywood, Florida, Mayor Bell was raised in South Florida and attended Miami-Dade College. She has been a resident of Homestead since 1979 and understands the needs of the diverse community she represents. She has a strong personal belief in volunteerism and service, and is completely dedicated to our community. What most stands out about Mayor Bell is the energy she puts into her work. Her positive attitude is what enables her to get things done and encourages others to join her in working towards achieving the goals she has laid out for the City of Homestead.

In 2004, Mayor Bell was chosen as the recipient of the Athena Award from the Greater Homestead/Florida City Chamber of Commerce and was a finalist for the Florida League of Cities' Councilperson of the Year Award in 2007.

In addition to putting the needs of our community first, Mayor Bell also makes life at a home a priority as a dedicated wife to husband Mark, and loving mother and grandmother to three children and seven grandchildren.

Mayor Lynda Bell exemplifies the true meaning of public service and does so by always prioritizing the needs of others first. As we celebrate Women's History Month, I ask you to join me in congratulating Mayor Bell for her invaluable service and contributions to our community.

HONORING ARIZONA PIONEER AND NATIONAL TREASURE MS. CELE PETERSON

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 9, 2009

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a Tucson, Arizona icon, a state of Arizona pioneer and a national treasure—Ms. Cele Peterson. Cele Peterson, a visionary and an activist, will turn 100 on March 14, 2009 and she is still busy as a catalyst for business, cultural, environmental, and children's organizations in Tucson, Arizona. She grew up in the wildest days of Bisbee, a little mining town in Arizona close to the border with Mexico. She tells stories about watching skirmishes of the Mexican Revolution from high on the hills across the valley, sitting at the knee of an old "mule skinner" listening to tales of the West, and of her brother dynamiting their backyard to build a garden for their mother. Cele maintains that her strength and persistence is due to the 365 steps she climbed up and down the steep hills of Bisbee to and from school every day.

At fifteen, she graduated from high school and began attending the University of Arizona. She went on to Sullins College in Bristol, Virginia and George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Cele worked at the Library of Congress in the manuscript division in the late 1920's. She was sent to Mexico City where she continued her work of translating old Spanish manuscripts pertaining to the history of the Southwest.

In 1931, when Cele opened a dress shop in Tucson, she began a career that integrated her love of history, creativity as a designer, business acumen and intelligence with her values and desires to improve the community. Today, Cele will still tell you that her most important priority always was her love for her husband Tom and their five children. Her love today continues to be centered on her on children, her 14 grandchildren and her 10 great grandchildren.

For the last 78 years, Cele Peterson Fashion's has grown and changed with the times, yet Cele claims she has never worked a day in her life. She loves what she does, and has adventures and honors that reflect her enthusiasm. In the 1940's she initiated a daily radio broadcast from her downtown store. In the 1950's she was selected as a young American designer to participate in the Merrimack fashion show at New York's Metropolitan Opera. Her denim tailored "Station Wagon Togs" drew international recognition. Her designs celebrated Arizona's special resources: copper, cotton, climate, and cattle.

Along the way, Cele founded what is now known as the Tucson Children's Museum, was a co-founder of the Casa de Los Niños, the first crisis nursery in the United States, and was very involved in the beginnings of the Arizona Theater Company and the Tucson Opera Company. She was the instigator of a non-profit organization that celebrates Tucson's Birthday and culture every August. Cele created the idea for Kids International Neighborhood, a non-profit organization that promotes cultural understanding, acceptance and respect among children of the world.

Cele served on University of Arizona boards for the College of Humanities, the School of

Architecture and the Steele Memorial Children's Research Foundation. She also served on the boards of the Tucson Trade Bureau, Tucson/Mexico Sister Cities, the Tucson Local Development Corporation, the Industrial Development Authority, the Tucson Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Tucson Symphony Orchestra, Angel Charity for Children, the Tucson Community Foundation and the Tucson Downtown Alliance.

Over the years her achievements have been recognized and honored with numerous awards including: the City of Hope Woman of the Year Award, the Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce Founders Award, the University of Arizona College of Agriculture Distinguished Citizen Award, the YWCA's Lifetime Achievement Award and the Ernst & Young/INC. Magazine 1995 National Socially Responsible Entrepreneur of the Year Award. Cele was named a Doña de Los Descendientes del Presidio de Tucson, the group of women responsible for maintaining Tucson's historic culture. Cele received a Crystal Apple from the Metropolitan Education Commission and was honored as one of the Four Women Who Helped Build Tucson by the Concerned Media Professionals. In 2004, the America-Israel Friendship League honored her with a Cycle of Life Award. In the same year she was named Grand Marshal of the Tucson Rodeo Parade. In 2007 the Tucson Pima Public Library designated the Cele Peterson Arizona Collection, as an ongoing resource of local history.

As of February 2009 Cele is working on a youth apprentice program for the Rodeo Parade Committee, actively recruiting additions for the Cele Peterson Collection at the library, and encouraging the exchange of cultural ideas for children through the distribution of I Love You in Many Languages, a Kids International Neighborhood book. Cele is also continuing her involvement with a coalition of environmental groups to restore and preserve native growth and wildflowers on a centrally located urban lot.

Clearly Cele Peterson is committed to finding beauty, and changing the world. She often quotes her mother, "Look into that field out there. You'll see whatever you want to see. You can see wildflowers and beauty or waste and junk." Cele has always made a clear decision to look for beauty. In the process, she became a community legend.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MARWAN BURGAN

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 9, 2009

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Marwan Burgan, community activist, human rights leader, Democratic Party stalwart and dear personal friend. Marwan's long struggle with cancer has ended, but the contributions he made to Northern Virginia, particularly within the Arab American community, will continue as a lasting tribute to his life.

By his own example of civic engagement and leadership, Marwan served as a remarkable model for other first-generation Palestinian Americans. In 2008, he founded PACE